

Those are the kinds of policy ideas she is going to be able to pursue.

The Treasury Department needs a tax policy point guard, somebody who, in effect—and everybody knows I went to school on a basketball scholarship dreaming of playing in the NBA. You always admired the person who ran the floor, who was the point guard, who really made sure the work got done and didn't really care who got the credit. That is Lily Batchelder. And if ever there was a person who could really help chip away at the polarization between Democrats and Republicans, it is Lily Batchelder.

I support her nomination fully. I urge my colleagues to do the same, and I yield the floor.

Madam President, I have one more nomination to discuss, and I would ask unanimous consent that I could complement my remarks—and I will be brief on this nomination—before we vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### NOMINATION OF JAYME RAY WHITE

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, next, the Senate is considering the nomination of Jayme White for the position of Deputy U.S. Trade Representative.

Now, Senators know that Jayme has been a longtime member of my Finance Committee staff. So I won't bury that lede today. We feel, all of us who have had a chance to work with him in the Finance Committee—and he has been supported by business and labor and Senators who worked together with him repeatedly over the years on complicated trade issues. We all come together to make the case that Jayme will be an exemplary Deputy USTR representative.

He is a topnotch advocate for our workers, our businesses, our farmers, and our ranchers. His confirmation will be a loss for the Senate Finance Committee—I can tell you that—but it is going to be the American people's gain.

For a little bit on Jayme's background, he is from our part of the world, the Pacific Northwest. He is a son of union workers near Seattle. He has worked on trade policy for more than 20 years on Capitol Hill. We kind of lured him away from his old job, working for his hometown representative, Congressman Jim McDermott. And since 2014, he has been the top trade and competitiveness adviser for the Finance Committee Democrats.

I have had a front-row seat watching Jayme for over a decade, and what he has always tried to do is reach across the aisle and say: Look, we know that to create more high-skilled, high-wage jobs in the private sector—and in our part of the world that is crucial. One out of four jobs depends on trade, and trade jobs pay better, often, than the nontrade jobs. You have to think about workers and the environment and good governance. And Jayme brings Members together from both sides of the aisle to make sure our trade policies in those areas are durable for the long term.

He has been way ahead of the pack on the need for more aggressive trade enforcement. Years ago, when I was chairman of the Finance Trade Subcommittee—our colleague Max Baucus was chairman of the full committee—Jayme set up a sting operation, an actual sting operation, with a dummy website to show how the trade cheats, the rip-off artists, were able to launder merchandise and avoid paying customs duties. They would ship goods through other countries, slap a new label on something with different information on their products, and managed to slip them into the American market. That experience helped us write and build momentum for trade enforcement, came to be known as the ENFORCE Act, passed a few years later.

When the Trump administration's new NAFTA was weak on enforcement, Jayme and Ambassador Tai worked to make huge improvements. And we all worked together in our committee. There were many of us. And, certainly, our colleague Senator BROWN of Ohio, who has championed this for so many years, this effort, this bipartisan effort to strengthen enforcement, made sure that USMCA raised the bar over any other trade agreement in history in terms of enforceable commitments on labor rights and the environment. He has been a champion of transparency and accountability.

And I can tell you, when I came into public life, people hardly knew anything about trade agreements that were getting ready to be voted on. I mean, you would go home for a meeting and people would ask you about some trade proposal, and you would be kind of in the dark. Jayme wanted to make sure that the days when well-connected reporters and insiders in the industry knew more than Members of Congress and the public about what was being negotiated—Jayme said: We are going to change that. And we did. There are now concrete rules giving Members access to negotiating text while the negotiations happen. Final text-to-trade agreements have to be public for anybody to see for a minimum of 60 days before the Congress can consider approving it. Those commitments to transparency, new accountability, which we had nothing like when I came into public life, come about because of Jayme's hard work.

So I will sum it all up. I know we are waiting for our vote. What I have come to say—and we have all listened to the debates about free trade and fair trade and the like—Jayme understands that our challenge, for all of us, for our workers and our small businesses and to protect the rights of all concerned, we have got to have trade done right—trade done right: rigorously enforce the trade laws on the books, make sure that there is more transparency and accountability, and, particularly, make sure that foreign markets—foreign markets—are open to American products and American workers.

I will just tell you, I am sorry to lose him after 12 years on my staff. I always

knew that he would be going off to big things. I wasn't sure it was going to be this soon.

Twenty-five members of the Finance Committee agreed with me when they voted to send his nomination to the floor. He has got 110 percent of my support. I urge my colleagues to vote yes on the White nomination.

My understanding is we will vote first on the Batchelder nomination that I spoke about earlier and that a bit later in the evening, we will vote on Mr. White. I strongly urge colleagues to vote for both.

#### VOTE ON BATCHELDER NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Batchelder nomination?

Mr. WYDEN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. (Ms. BALDWIN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 64, nays 34, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 372 Ex.]

#### YEAS—64

Baldwin	Hassan	Reed
Bennet	Heinrich	Romney
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Blunt	Hirono	Sanders
Booker	Kaine	Schatz
Brown	Kelly	Schumer
Cantwell	King	Shaheen
Cardin	Klobuchar	Sinema
Carper	Leahy	Smith
Casey	Lujan	Stabenow
Cassidy	Manchin	Tester
Collins	Markey	Tillis
Coons	McConnell	Toomey
Cornyn	Menendez	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warner
Crapo	Murkowski	Warnock
Daines	Murphy	Warren
Duckworth	Murray	Whitehouse
Durbin	Ossoff	Wyden
Gillibrand	Padilla	Young
Graham	Peters	
Grassley	Portman	

#### NAYS—34

Barrasso	Hawley	Risch
Blackburn	Hoehn	Rubio
Boozman	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Braun	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Burr	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Capito	Kennedy	Shelby
Cotton	Lankford	Sullivan
Cramer	Lee	Thune
Cruz	Lummis	Tuberville
Ernst	Marshall	Wicker
Fischer	Moran	
Hagerty	Paul	

#### NOT VOTING—2

Feinstein	Rounds
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The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid

upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be recognized as if in morning business for such time as I shall consume.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, first of all, I am going to do something that is a little bit unusual. I will start off by saying thank you. We have got a lot of people to thank. Yet we never seem to do that.

When we look at what happened in Afghanistan over the past 20 years—I can't approximate how many times I was over there—that was tough duty for those guys and the gals there; it was not easy. This is not the place you want to go take a vacation—and to their families. Then, of course, on August 26, we were reminded so painfully of what we ask our troops and their families to do. They lay it all on the line for this country. Our servicemembers represent the very best of us. Over the past 20 years, they did everything that they could in Afghanistan to root out evil and to champion American values. I couldn't be more grateful to or have more respect for them than I have today.

I say this not only because we should say it more often but because it is important to remember that what we saw in Afghanistan over the past few months was not a failure of our military; it was a failure of the Commander in Chief—the President of the United States—and the people who advised him on his policy in Afghanistan.

I still don't know who those people are, and, you know, I have chaired the Senate Armed Services Committee and other committees. People ask me, when I go back to my State of Oklahoma—they will say: Hey, who is advising the President to do all these things? I have to tell them I don't know, and I have been around for a long time. I don't remember any administration where I just honestly didn't know who was making the decisions and who was advising—in this case, advising the President.

But what we did witness, though, was a failure of the Commander in Chief and whoever was advising him. No one can look at what happened over the past few months and claim that it was a success like President Biden did. It was a disaster. Leaving Americans behind, and allies—don't forget our allies who are still left behind. It was un-American.

The administration keeps saying: "We didn't inherit a plan." That is false. They inherited a condition-based agreement and made their own policy decisions. It was condition-based; it wasn't open-ended. It was something that was out there, and they had the reins.

Let's keep in mind, this administration has a majority in the House and the Senate and the White House, and they make their own decisions. And they say: We didn't have a plan. They had a plan, and we had a plan, but everything we did and the previous administration did was condition-based.

So according to the condition-based approach, President Trump agreed to withdraw our troops from Afghanistan if and only if the Taliban acted against al-Qaida. Now, that is one of the things. There were many other conditions, and one condition was to leave some of our troops there, not just to walk away, to vacate. And those conditions were in line when this administration came in, and that didn't happen. President Biden knows it. Secretary Blinken admitted it.

When President Biden announced his decision to withdraw back in April, a senior administration official told the Washington Post: "The President has judged that a condition-based approach is a recipe for staying in Afghanistan forever." That is a quote.

Just last week, in front of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, when asked if the Taliban had severed its relationship with al-Qaida, Secretary Blinken said the relationship has not been severed.

Let's keep that in mind. We keep hearing that, yes, they are taking action against that administration, but the relationship has not been severed.

Now President Biden says that he will hold the Taliban accountable, but he didn't hold the Taliban accountable while our troops were still in Afghanistan. I mean, that is when we had the leverage to do it, but we didn't do it, and he has presented no plan for holding the terrorists accountable now.

This decision—this rushed withdrawal that has left the Taliban stronger than it was in 9/11 was President Biden's alone. He is responsible for the chaos that followed. He is going to be held accountable and should—everyone who advised him to make such a horrible decision.

Now, what is more outrageous to me is that President Biden left Americans behind. That is not something we do. He said that we were going to get everyone out, and that didn't happen.

You know, when historians look back at this—this may be decades from now, centuries from now—this is what they will remember: The Biden administration knowingly left Americans behind.

The administration has tried to downplay this. Early in the evacuation, Secretary of State Blinken said that there were perhaps 10,000 or 15,000 American citizens in Afghanistan. Our men and women in uniform, working tirelessly and effectively with our diplomats under incredibly difficult circumstances, managed to evacuate about 6,000 of our citizens. Now, according to my math, that means that between 4,000 and 9,000 Americans were left behind. Secretary Blinken says that there were only 100 and that the

rest of them preferred to stay in Afghanistan.

By the way, some legitimately did prefer to stay in Afghanistan because they were married people, they had families, and they made it very clear that—when something like this normally happens, families are moved as a family unit. Not there. That is not what happened.

So that is more than bad math; it is a lie. We know and every congressional office that tried to get people out of Afghanistan knows—and I know this because our Senate office was very busy at that time helping people to get out—that there were many U.S. citizens who wanted to leave Afghanistan, but they couldn't leave because the Taliban would not let their families go with them. Well, that is exactly what I would expect from the terrorists who were there at that time.

So Secretary Blinken wants you to think that these people made a choice. He wants to hide the fact that the administration in which he serves created its own hostage crisis and gave the Taliban the upper hand.

Keep in mind when we talk about this, it is the Taliban. They were the terrorists.

He also wants you to think it was the fault of those families they didn't get out before August, repeating that they had been telling Americans to leave for months. There is a kernel of truth to that, but it is clouded by the fact that they repeatedly stated that it would be a year, probably more, before Kabul was at risk of falling to the Taliban. Instead of 36 months, the fall of Kabul only took 36 hours.

In addition to American citizens, President Biden left behind our Afghan partners who risked everything to support our shared security goals. I was out there many times in the past, talking about that very thing, about the problems they had and the dangers they were in.

Now, these are not our American citizens; they were some of our allies who were left over there. In addition to American citizens, President Biden left behind our Afghan partners who risked everything to support our shared security goals. As a result of the President's decision, Afghan women and children have been thrown back to the stone age. We all know that. We know what they are doing right now. We don't have to guess.

Our allies and partners around the world are questioning our credibility, our leadership, and our commitment. These are our allies. They are not used to having the rug pulled out from under them. This is the first time.

Our enemies are bolstered by President Biden's policy, which puts Taliban terrorists in charge of Afghanistan—a policy that spread the perception that we not only abandoned our allies and partners, but we also abandoned our own citizens.

Seeing all these failures, Americans are demanding accountability, and they deserve it.